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SUBJECT: SOUTHEAST TURKEY PRESS SUMMARY FOR FEBRUARY 21, 2007

¶1. This is the Southeastern Turkey press summary for February 21, 2007. Please note that Turkish press reports often contain errors or exaggerations; AmConsulate Adana does not vouch for the accuracy of the reports summarized here.

POLITICAL

¶2. BOLGE: Eric Green, U.S. Consul to Adana, who came to Mardin to attend a series of visits at the Habur Border Gate in Sirnak and to pay local visits to businessmen, political party representatives, and civil society organizations, talked with press members during his visit to the Mardin Governor Mehmet Kiliclar and said that he came to see the economic, regional and political developments at a local level. Mr. Green, when asked about the policy the U.S. government would pursue about the draft law brought to congress about the Armenian genocide claims, said that the U.S. government, the President and the Secretary of the State shared the belief that such a move would

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produce no good results. Mr. Green believed that Turkey and Armenia should engage in bilateral meetings to discuss the issues concerning the past to better shape the future. Mr. Green later paid a visit to DTP Mardin Provincial Chairperson Ferhan Turk, who is the brother of DTP National Chairperson Ahmet Turk.

¶3. SABAH (GUNEY): Aytac Durak, Mayor of Adana, welcomed the idea of Sabah's Guney supplement about stimulating citrus fruit consumption through holding an international citrus fruit festival in Adana. Durak said that they will include a program concerning citrus fruit under this year's International Altin Koza Film Festival which is an annual festival held in Adana.

¶4. GUNDEM: According to the daily, as the Kurds have begun preparations for this year's Newroz celebrations, senior Turkish police officers from the National Security Directorate and 12 security directors in provinces of eastern and southeastern region held a security summit in Diyarbakir yesterday allegedly in order "to prevent the Newroz celebrations to have wide influence in the region."

¶5. GUNDEM: Diyarbakir Bar Association will hold a conference called "Truth, Justice and Facing the Past For Reconciliation and Peace" with support from Hainrich Boll Stiftung Association on February 23 at the theater hall of the Diyarbakir Municipality. Sezgin Tanrikulu, Chairperson of Diyarbakir Bar Association, regarded the conference as one that would spearhead establishment of an independent commission, similar to Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa,

which was co-founded by Alex Boraine.

¶16. GUNDEM: Staff members of a journal called Ozgur Halk (Free Peoples) applied to a court in Van to claim back the documents, magazines and books the police seized during a raid they conducted at the Van branch office of the journal on an unspecified date. The representative of the journal claimed that the raid was unauthorized and the material the police seized were not banned publications.

¶17. GUNDEM: A new Kurdish television called Newroz TV started its test broadcasts from Europe yesterday morning. The language of broadcasting will be Kurdish and Persian and the actual broadcasts will start on March 21.

¶18. GUNDEM: DTP Bitlis provincial party organization distributed 10,000 brochures to people for the elections that will be held in 2007. The brochures are making calls to people to register themselves as voters.

¶19. RADIKAL / ZAMAN: An Istanbul court ordered that Former Van Prosecutor Ferhat Sarikaya, who was dismissed because of the controversial indictment he prepared for the Semdinli bombing incident in Hakkari, should pay 5000 YTL monetary fine for attacking the personal rights of Major General Nuri Ali Karababa in the Semdinli indictment. Sarikaya was already fined recently to pay 5000 YTL to another senior military officer of the Sirnak Provincial Jandarma Command on the same grounds.

¶10. ZAMAN: According to an election poll conducted by Plusmayak, thirty three per cent of the Adana electorate will cast votes for AKP in 2007 parliamentary elections. The votes for CHP turned out as 21.4 per cent and the votes for MHP turned out as 15.28 per cent.

SECURITY

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¶11. GUNDEM: The daily reported that rural areas around the villages of Siirt were attacked by five helicopters at 6 a.m. yesterday within the scope of military operations that have been going on in the area for about a month. Nearly 200 armored military vehicles from the Siirt Brigade Command have recently been deployed in the Mount Mava region and many soldiers have been sent to the area. The daily also reported a military operation that had started in the Amanos Mountains. (Note: Amanos Mountains cross the Kahramanmaras and Hatay provinces. End Note.)

ECONOMY

¶12. HURRIYET (CUKUROVA): In order to broaden the trade opportunities between Turkey, Iraq and Syria, Mehmet Aslan, president of the executive board of Gaziantep Chamber of Commerce, suggested that the border trade locality should be built in a place called Akcakoyun and direct train lines should be established between Gaziantep in Turkey and Aleppo in Syria. Aslan further said that the U.S. and Iraqi governments should play a more assertive role in helping to ensure the safety of the Turkish transport companies as they operate to carry goods to and from Iraq.

¶13. SABAH (GUNEY): Marc Pierini, Head of the European Commission's Delegation to Turkey, and representatives of 13 EU Information Offices attended the meeting held to support the network of EU's information offices at Gaziantep's Chamber of Commerce.

CRIME / LAW ENFORCEMENT

¶14. BOLGE / GUNDEM / CUMHURİYET / RADIKAL: Ministry of Health started an investigation into allegations of patient abuse, violence, and maltreatment in Adana's Hospital for Mental Illnesses that a national television channel brought to light. The chief doctor of the hospital has been suspended from office

and the health ministry sent inspectors to the hospital to probe the case. MHP Adana provincial chairperson Yilmaz Tankut said that the footage of the situation in the hospital that was broadcast on a national TV station was abhorrent and constituted a shame for humanity.

¶15. EVRENSEL / GUNDEM / CUMHURİYET: A regional administrative court affirmed that Diyarbakir Governor's Office was right in objecting to the decision taken on March 2, 2006 by the Diyarbakir Provincial Assembly to include Kurdish equivalents for Turkish village names written on signs.

¶16. SABAH (GUNEY) / ZAMAN: The court ordered a 15,000 YTL fine against Ceyhan District Mayor in Adana for attacking the personal rights of PM Erdogan and Deputy Prime Minister Abdullah Gul in an interview a local Adana daily made with the Mayor on December 19, 2005.

¶17. SABAH (GUNEY) / BOLGE / EKSPRES: Adana Mayor Aytac Durak paid a visit to Chairperson of Adana Bar Association and its executive board members. Durak announced that the municipality would allocate 1290 square meter land for the social facility that is envisaged to be built for retired attorneys.

¶18. SABAH (GUNEY) / HURRIYET (CUKUROVA) / ZAMAN: An anonymous businessman donated 25,000 YTL for the fundraising campaign Adana Mayor Aytac Durak initiated one month ago for one of the two soccer clubs of Adana, namely Adanaspor. Durak conveyed the money to the deputy president of the soccer club.

¶19. HURRIYET (CUKUROVA): Truck drivers transporting goods to Iraq initiated a strike when subcontractor companies started to pay their salaries lower than the amount initially agreed upon.

¶20. HURRIYET (CUKUROVA): Instructors of EU, Ministry of Health, and Turkey's Family Health and Planning Foundation funded two-year "Peer Education on Sexual Health Project" reaching out to 8000 youth in Turkey, 2000 of whom are based in Adana province. Instructors informed youth on healthy sexuality and reproduction.

¶21. HURRIYET (CUKUROVA): General Directorate of Foundations will donate 7 million YTL for the restoration project of the historical Ashab-i Keyf complex located in Kahramanmaraş's Afsin

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district.

¶22. BOLGE: Gaziantep Mayor Asim Guzelbey briefed press about a project undertaken by the Gaziantep Municipality and ILO (International Labor Organization) that would aim to offer vocational training to the parents of those children who are working in the streets to earn livelihood.

¶23. CUMHURİYET / BOLGE / ZAMAN: Under a program of the EU called 'Comenius 1.2 School Partnerships', 15 students from Slovakia and Turkey met at a high school in Turkey to learn about the cultural humor patterns in both countries in order to promote better understanding and friendship among the youth.
GREEN